

Child Support Services Hopes 'ELFS' Can Work Magic in Tracking Files

Over the years whenever a file has turned up missing at the Department of Child Support Services, staff would jokingly blame it on the "little elves" that roam the floors at night.

With approximately 130,000 files on open child support cases, maintaining the files and tracking their whereabouts is a huge project for staff. Should someone need a file that wasn't in the department's "file bank" or with the person who had checked it out, a flurry of emails would often result. Messages such as: "Do you have the file," or "Uh-oh, I need it for court today."

But those days are close to being over. By the end of November, the department expects to launch a wireless system for tracking those files—a system that will ultimately save time and money and increase the department's ability to serve its customers.

But even though Child Support Services estimates they will be able to find what they're looking for 99.9 percent of the time, the department will never forget those little elves. That's because the new wireless system will be called the Electronic Location File System, or ELFS for short.



ELFS transmits data over a wireless network so file location information is updated real-time.

"Basically, it's tracking bar codes, but it's doing it real time so you know where everything is moving at the same time," said Darius Fattahipour, who helped develop the system for his department.

Every file will be assigned a bar code, as will every employee. As the files move from place to place, the information will be scanned using a wireless pocket PC and



DCSS staff will be able to scan the file label with this hand-held device.

sent to a special database so the file's movement can be tracked.

"In the past, when we were manually doing it, we only had control of those files that were in the file bank," said Sande Hanson, production services division chief for DCSS. "With this system, it tells us where the file is checked out to so we can go and retrieve it and deliver it."

"From a wireless standpoint, it's probably pretty innovative," Fattahipour said. When information is scanned about a file, it's trans-

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Fight the Bite of the West Nile Virus

What's the buzz?

West Nile virus is not here—yet.

Although we have not seen a confirmed case in San Diego County humans or animals, now is the time for County employees to learn about the virus so we can protect our community and ourselves.

Humans, as well as animals, can be exposed to the West Nile virus through mosquito bites.

"Perhaps the most important thing to know about West Nile virus is that fewer than one percent of those bitten by an *infected* mosquito will get sick," said Dr. Nancy Bowen, acting health officer in the Health and Human Services Agency.

"We don't know exactly when West Nile virus will come to San Diego County, but we do expect it within the next few years."

Gary Erbeck
Environmental Health Director

Those most at risk for West Nile virus are the elderly and those with weakened immune systems. Among animals, birds and horses are the most affected. The vast majority of people infected with the virus will have no symptoms at all. Those people who do get sick generally suffer from fever, headache, nausea, body aches, mild skin rashes and swollen lymph nodes. In very rare cases, the disease will progress to encephalitis (inflammation of the brain), or meningitis (inflammation of the lining of the brain and spinal cord).

How can we, as County employees, help protect our community and ourselves from mosquito-borne illnesses?

"We need to eliminate standing water, report mosquito breeding areas and any dead birds to Vector Surveillance and Control," said Gary Erbeck, Environmental Health Director. "We don't know exactly when West Nile virus will come to San Diego County, but we do expect it within the next few years."

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NewsBriefs

Teen Art Contest

"Wild Animals and Reading" is the theme of a teen art contest sponsored by the public libraries of San Diego and Imperial Counties. Students between sixth and twelfth grade who live in the counties are eligible. The winning artist will receive \$150 and the design will be used as part of the regional 2003 teen summer reading program. Entries must be submitted by Nov. 20. Applications are available at County Library branches, as well as other public libraries in the county. For more information, contact Melissa Potter at (858) 694-2450.

Project Clean Makes a Splash

Project Clean Water was recognized with an Excellence in Environmental Health Award. This is the second year in a row that an Environmental Health program was lauded by the California Conference of Directors of Environmental Health (CCDEH) at its annual conference. The County was recognized for its coordination in developing and implementing consensus strategies to ensure a vital economy and long-term sustainability of the beneficial uses of the County's water resources. The CCDEH is comprised of environmental health directors from 58 city and county jurisdictions in California.

Las Vegas Excursion

The San Diego County Latino Association is sponsoring a Las Vegas trip November 22-24. That's three days, two nights at the Four Queens Hotel and Casino. Cost for this trip is \$95 and includes hotel, double occupancy, and transportation to Vegas and back. \$30 reserves your spot. Seats are going fast so act now. Contact Joaquin Gracida (760) 940-6859 or Ricardo Cunningham (619) 685-2487.

The SDCLA is open to all County employees. It offers networking opportunities through mentoring and training, and seeks access to promotional possibilities through participation in County government.

For more information on membership, contact Kenneth Stevens (619) 557-4151 or Ricardo Cunningham (619) 685-2487.

Trade & Business Applauded

The "Business is Great on Route 78" video produced by the Office of Trade & Business Development (OTBD) received an honorable mention at the International Economic Development Council 2002 Awards of Excellence Gala in September. The project, an interactive CD highlighting business opportunities within the cities of Escondido, Vista, Oceanside, San Marcos and Carlsbad, was selected by a panel of economic development experts from both the public and private sectors.

OTBD also received an Exemplary Outreach Program award for "exemplary collaboration in reaching East County small businesses." The San Diego Supplier Development Council, which hosted the awards, recognized the County and its partners for a Lakeside/Spring Valley business outreach program that brought government, community and financial services to the doorstep of small business.



In Walt's Words

Workplace Safety a Top Concern

The County of San Diego has plenty of reasons to be concerned about worker safety. Our 17,000 employees are out in the community every day in many different capacities. Whether it's staffing a health clinic, maintaining roads, fighting crime or assisting customers at public counters, our jobs expose us to potential health risks.

It's good to know the County has many programs to protect and enhance worker safety. They run the gamut from training courses for safe handling of chemicals to the Employee Assistance Program, which helps employees maintain mental and emotional well-being.

At this time of year, another important program to mention is the free flu shots that will be offered to all employees during the week of Nov. 11. Any employee with a County I.D. badge is eligible for a free flu shot. While the shots are beneficial for all of us, they are especially important for people who are in certain risk groups, and those who care for them. The risk groups include people over 65, and those with conditions such as asthma or diabetes. For a complete list of the times, dates and locations for the flu shots, see the online version of County News.

The County has a strong focus on worker safety. For example, road crews in the Department of Public Works hold weekly "tailgate" sessions, where they receive safety training. The Department of Environmental Health, through its Occupational Health Program, surveys work sites to identify hazards such as chemicals, asbestos or excessive noise. The program also offers training to help employees avoid injury from these or other potential hazards, and also supervises the removal of hazards such as asbestos from County buildings.

Human Resources sponsors annual health education fairs that focus on such topics as healthy eating habits, stress management and early detection of illness. Also, there are voluntary immunizations for employees whose jobs expose them to specific risks: rabies shots for Animal Control employees and hepatitis shots for Public Works, General Services and Parks employees who might come in contact with sewage.

Training available through the Human Resources catalogue includes office ergonomics, first aid/CPR, defensive driving and avoidance of workplace violence.

It goes without saying, that I am constantly concerned about the safety of county workers. I hope all employees will take advantage of these services and keep our workplaces as safe as possible.

Walt Ekard
Chief Administrative Officer

County Rings Closing Bell at the New York Stock Exchange

In an extremely rare occurrence for a government entity, San Diego County Board of Supervisors' Chairman Ron Roberts and County Chief Financial Officer Bill Kelly were invited by the New York Stock Exchange to ring the closing bell on Wall Street in October.

The occasion marked the first day that County of San Diego public income notes (PINES) were listed on the NYSE. These notes are traded like preferred stock. The goal is to use the proceeds from the sale to fund the County's retirement fund obligations.

Only two other governmental entities – the New Jersey Economic Development Authority and the Philadelphia Authority for Industrial Development – have appeared on the Exchange.

The San Diego sunshine must have been shining brightly on Wall Street, as stocks soared 378 points—the largest one-day gain since September 2001.

"What can I say," joked Roberts. "San Diego must have the midas touch."

Roberts added that NYSE Chairman Richard Grasso invited Roberts and Kelley to come back and ring the bell anytime.

The County's Wall Street venture is quite interesting given the unique financing structure that is used—making a taxable municipal bond look like an equity and listing the security on the NYSE. The County's symbol is CLD.



Chairman Ron Robert (center) and Chief Financial Officer Bill Kelly (second from right) rang the closing bell on Wall Street.

ELFS

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mitted directly to the database and updated instantly. "The engineers put together an incredibly secure network, which we had to have in order to track the case files."

The project is so unique that when it came to the attention of MacroMedia, the company that makes one of the software applications used by ELFS, the company asked if they could do a case study on it. MacroMedia wants to share the application idea with other customers via its Web site and marketing materials.

The technology may be grabbing the spotlight, but some of the real work is going into preparing the files for scanning. Staff has already labeled all of the closed cases and is in process of labeling the open cases. Labeling the files stored in the file bank is easy, but then there are the approximately 50,000 files that are checked out to staff—who work out of multiple floors

in two separate buildings.

"We estimate we would need 48 people to carry this off during the nighttime," said Priscilla Barrett, who is overseeing the effort to label all the files. They will have pages of labels not yet matched to files, assign groups of labels to each person, then they will have to go from cubicle to cubicle to find the file that matches the label.

"Yes, it's going to be difficult," Barrett said. "It's going to be like looking for a needle in a haystack. But hopefully we're going to organize it in such a way, that it's like a train going through the cubicles."

It's a time-intensive project, but one that will have a big impact on the customers served by DCSS.

"If we can get a file to a caseworker quicker, and that caseworker is dealing with an individual who is trying to get child support—that drastically improves our customer service," Hanson said. "That's one of the big focuses here. You need a file to provide service to the public."

Ver•ba•tim

Letters from satisfied customers served by County employees.

Terrence Singleton and **Robert Dalatory** (Public Works) were commended by a representative of the San Miguel Fire Department for their support following a pedestrian accident.

"It is refreshing to see genuine concern and services provided by other public employees. These men were professional, helpful, and I wanted to express my thanks for a job well done."

Juan Fernandez (Environmental Health) was called a credit to his department by a long-time service station owner following an inspection.

"This one was by far the first time I have ever had the pleasure of an inspector who was as professional, informative, helpful, courteous and knowledgeable as Mr. Juan Fernandez."

Jackie Werth and **Doug Ailshie** (HHSA) were praised for the training and assistance they provide to the other County employees.

"They are without fail exceedingly helpful, generous with their time and professional in their work."

Kristina Long (Animal Control) and the staff at the South County Shelter were commended for their response to a call regarding an injured peacock.

"[Kristina] who answered the phone was exceptionally courteous, professional and more importantly sounded concerned for the health and welfare of the bird. I am very appreciative of the response by County staff, both in the office and in the field."

Dianne Timm (HHSA, Family Resource Center) was thanked for helping a Medi-Cal recipient resolve problems in getting needed prescription medications.

"I really appreciate her time and effort. She has been a real pleasure in assisting my needs. I am thankful for her outstanding communication skills."

Gerardo Gutierrez (HHSA) was praised for his "can do" attitude in helping a client.

"This was refreshing and cast your department in a whole new light, combining efficiency and politeness. He is to be commended for his fine work for your department."

Patti Fordyce and **Bob Baker** (Assessor/Recorder/Clerk) wowed a customer by providing one of the most expedient follow through actions he had ever witnessed.

"It is an extreme pleasure to see customer service and personable people in the County Assessor's office."

Public Works Employee Takes Her Safety Message on the Road

She's the tall lady in the orange vest to school kids at Hanson Lane Elementary School in Ramona.

That's because every year Public Works employee Cindy Ziegler volunteers her time to speak to the school's kindergarten and first grade classes about a topic she knows well: road safety. Her 15 minute presentations are based on her life experiences in both her work (she's the lead person

for Ramona's Road Station) and as a mother.

"I'm mostly trying to tell the kids everything that I wanted my kids to do for me when they were growing up," Ziegler said.

Ziegler talks to the students about looking before they cross the street ("I tell them look five times before they cross so hopefully they'll remember three"), learning how to be safe around cars, making sure someone knows when they're going to

take a different route than usual, avoiding manholes and storm drains, and what to do if they should fall in.

Ziegler, whose two daughters both attended Hanson Lane Elementary, has been a regular guest of the school for 13 years, ever since she heard a news report about a little boy who was killed crossing the road in front of his school.

"I can't tell you where it was, but it was on the news and it hit me enough that I wanted to get involved with teaching kids road safety."

Ever since then, it's been an experience that this County employee treasures.

"I should have probably been a teacher," Ziegler said. "I love working with kids."

Her favorite part is seeing the students respond to her presentations, as well as getting stopped in the store at night by those who remember the tall lady in the orange vest who



DPW Employee Cindy Ziegler

talked with them about road safety.

"I don't know if I've ever helped a kid, but it doesn't matter," Ziegler said. "If I can just stop one kid from going down somewhere he shouldn't be, or running across the street, that's all I care about."

"I'll never know, but that's all I care about."

West Nile Virus

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Employees should review the special employee precautions information that is being distributed countywide via email, or visit the "West Nile virus" section of the County's Web site for more tips, including how to apply insect repellent containing DEET.

The County of San Diego has had a comprehensive mosquito-borne encephalitis surveillance program in place since the 1950s and has successfully combated other mosquito-borne diseases.

Recently the County brought together a group of experts to focus on West Nile

virus and create a strategic response plan that will integrate surveillance and control activities countywide.

First detected in New York City in 1999, West Nile virus has rapidly spread across the United States. In September, Los Angeles County saw the first confirmed case of West Nile virus in California.

To report mosquito breeding areas or dead birds call (858) 694-2888.

For more information about West Nile virus log onto the Department of Environmental Health's Web site at www.sdcdeh.org or click on "West Nile Virus Update" from the County's home page (www.sdcounty.ca.gov).

NewsMakers NewsMakers

Kathleen Thuner, head of Agriculture, Weights and Measures, was elected president of the National Association of Consumer Agency Administrators (NACAA) for a two-year term. The NACAA is a non-profit association for government consumer protection agency administrators. Members are front line advocates who work directly with consumers to solve problems, advance relevant legislation, and support consumer outreach and education.

Steve Carroll, Public Defender, was named Legal Employer of the Year by the Earl B. Gilliam Bar Association in honor of his commitment to

diversity and his "good record of hiring African American attorneys."

Michael L. Moore has been named Chief Technology Officer. Moore starts his new job on Nov. 8 and will oversee and monitor the County's information technology outsourcing contract with the Pennant Alliance. Moore comes to the County from Science Applications International Corp., where he was a corporate vice president. Moore has worked in the private sector technology field since 1989, when he retired from a 20-year Naval career. He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from National University.

County News is published for the 17,000 employees of the County of San Diego.

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This information is available upon request in alternative formats for persons with disabilities.



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COUNTY NEWS *Extra*

Service Awards

Congratulations to County employees reaching the following milestones in November:

35 years

Janice Donovan (Probation)
Callie J. Margolis (HHSA)

30 years

Michele R. Morgan (Sheriff)
Ronnie A. Hobgood (Agriculture,
Weights & Measures)
William N. Parr, Jr. (Parks &
Recreation)
Frederick E. Bast (Public Works)
Bruce W. Chastain (Public Works)
Sherrill A. Moore (HHSA)
Robert L. Platt (HHSA)
Sherry F. Schadeck (HHSA)
Dolores Iverson (Superior Court)
Delrene Sims (Superior Court)

25 years

Carlos R. Longoria (Auditor &
Controller)
Carlos O. Armour (District Attorney)
Maria Villavicencio (District Attorney)
Margaret A. Holcomb (Public Works)
Greta K. Ash (HHSA)
Deborah Bewall (HHSA)
Stephen F. Briggs (HHSA)
Beverly A. Dodge (HHSA)
Suzanne L. Hunt (HHSA)
Marcia L. James (HHSA)
Margaret M. Talaro (HHSA)
David Lee Thomas (HHSA)
Grace E. Young (HHSA)

20 years

Michele Bustamante (Sheriff)
Rachael Martinez (Sheriff)
Sandra L. Hendron (District Attorney)
Jack D. Breckenridge (Probation)
Mary M. Machado (County Library)
Soksann Edwards (HHSA)
Sheila D. Matthews (HHSA)
Rose C. Edwards (Superior Court)
Charles E. Freeman (Superior Court)
Mahmood I. Hossain (Air Pollution
Control District)

In Memoriam

Robert L. Cooke (HHSA)	9/1
Ray M. Eckwall (General Services)	8/26
Odessa Greene (Hospital)	9/14
Robert M. Hall (Probation)	9/5
Edwina O. Holland (Superintendent of Schools)	8/1
Helen G. Jarett (HHSA)	8/26
Henry D. McIntosh (Transportation)	9/24

Dorothy Mitchell (Probation)	8/31
Sam Moore (Planning & Land Use)	8/23
Martin Rintala (Animal Control)	9/14
Jeanne C. Ruffner (Public Welfare)	9/1
Charles J. Sexton (Registrar of Voters)	9/4
Jacob G. Werner (General Services)	9/11

Laurali and Scott T. Noll, Sheriff's Department (8/31); Neil Rossi, Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office (9/16); and Bernadett Thomas, HHSA (9/19).

County News Extra includes expanded information about and for County employees. If you have something you'd like considered for either *County News* or *County News Extra*, please contact the newsletter editor at (619) 595-4632 or e-mail at rene.carmichael@sdcounty.ca.gov. Items can also be faxed to (619) 595-4664 or mailed to MS A-359, Attn: *County News*.

Retirements

The San Diego County Employees Retirement Association reports the following employees recently retired:

James W. Bailey	Stephen J. Dragasits	Michael L. Myers	Rosemary Staffor
Richard H. Baldwin	Terrell Ann Fay	Mary Lou Newman	Larry R. Staley
Frank E. Barnhart	Sonia D. Fernandez	Leslie D. Nielsen	Kathleen M. Stroecker
Jorja D. Barrett	Kathye L. Helgeson	Michael R. Osborne	Elaine Marilyn Thompson
Cynthia L. Brandt	Julia A. Hernandez	Reynaldo A. Pellos	Robert S. Wheeler
Delia A. Carvajal	Roseanna T. Inouye	Peter Puraty	Catherine J. Youel
Jackie L. Castanos	Charles E. Jass	Anne L. Rast	Joyce R. Zehnder
Douglas R. Christensen	Huon Kim	Patricia Reimer	Marci Ziegler
Dale L. Cripe	Lolita F. Lizarraga	Norma M. Ruptier	Samuel M. Zolezzi
Daniel L. Cunningham	Bettenia Martin	Sid Saltzstein	
George R. Dean, Jr.	Martha Martinez-Johnson	Claire M. Shea	
Irina Dehzad	Melissa L. McFadden	Evelyn I. Sly	

Enviro Fair 2002

The County of San Diego joins with KPRI Radio 102.1 and other businesses and government agencies for Enviro Fair 2002 on Nov. 8, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., at the Del Mar Fairgrounds.

The event is to encourage people to work toward conserving more natural resources and to consider "zero waste."

Attendees will have the opportunity to meet professionals at the forefront of their industries in recycling, composting, zero

waste, pollution prevention, and energy and water conservation. There will also be a book signing by Bill Shireman, the author of "What We Learned in the Rainforest...Business Lessons from Nature," as well as environmentally friendly vendors and non-profit organizations.

For more information, visit www.sdfair.com or call (858) 755-1161. Admission is free, but there may be a charge for parking.

County of San Diego Department of Human Resources

Flu season is right around the corner! To ensure that employees are protected from the "flu bug", The County of San Diego is pleased to provide FREE Flu Shots to County employees.

Employees who are in the following groups, or who care for, or work with persons with high-risk conditions are strongly encouraged to get a flu shot during this one-week-only offering. No appointment or pre-registration is necessary. All employees possessing a County ID will be eligible for a flu shot.

The following groups because of chronic health conditions are at increased risk of developing serious complications from influenza disease:

- ✓ Persons over the age of 65 years;
- ✓ Young children and adults with chronic heart disease, lung disease (including asthma), kidney disorders, metabolic disorders (e.g. diabetes), blood disorders, or immune system disorders;
- ✓ Pregnant women who will be in their second or third trimester during winter or spring;
- ✓ Individuals who take medications that lower their ability to fight infections.

Present your County ID at one of the sites listed below to get your free flu shot:

Tues., Nov. 12	9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Rooms 363 A&B	Hall of Justice 330 West Broadway, San Diego
	9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Dianne Jacob Conf Rm.	East County Regional Center 250 E. Main, El Cajon
Weds., Nov. 13	9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Rooms 302/303	County Administration Center 1600 Pacific Highway, San Diego
Thurs., Nov. 14	9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Office of Disaster Preparedness Library	County Operations Center 5555 Overland Ave., Bldg 19 San Diego
Fri., Nov. 15	9 a.m. to 4 p.m. District Attorney Conf. Rm. C	North County Regional Center 325 S. Melrose Drive, 5 th Floor, Vista
	9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Greg Cox Community Conf. Rm.	South Bay Assessor's Office 590 Third Ave., Chula Vista

****REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR COUNTY ID****